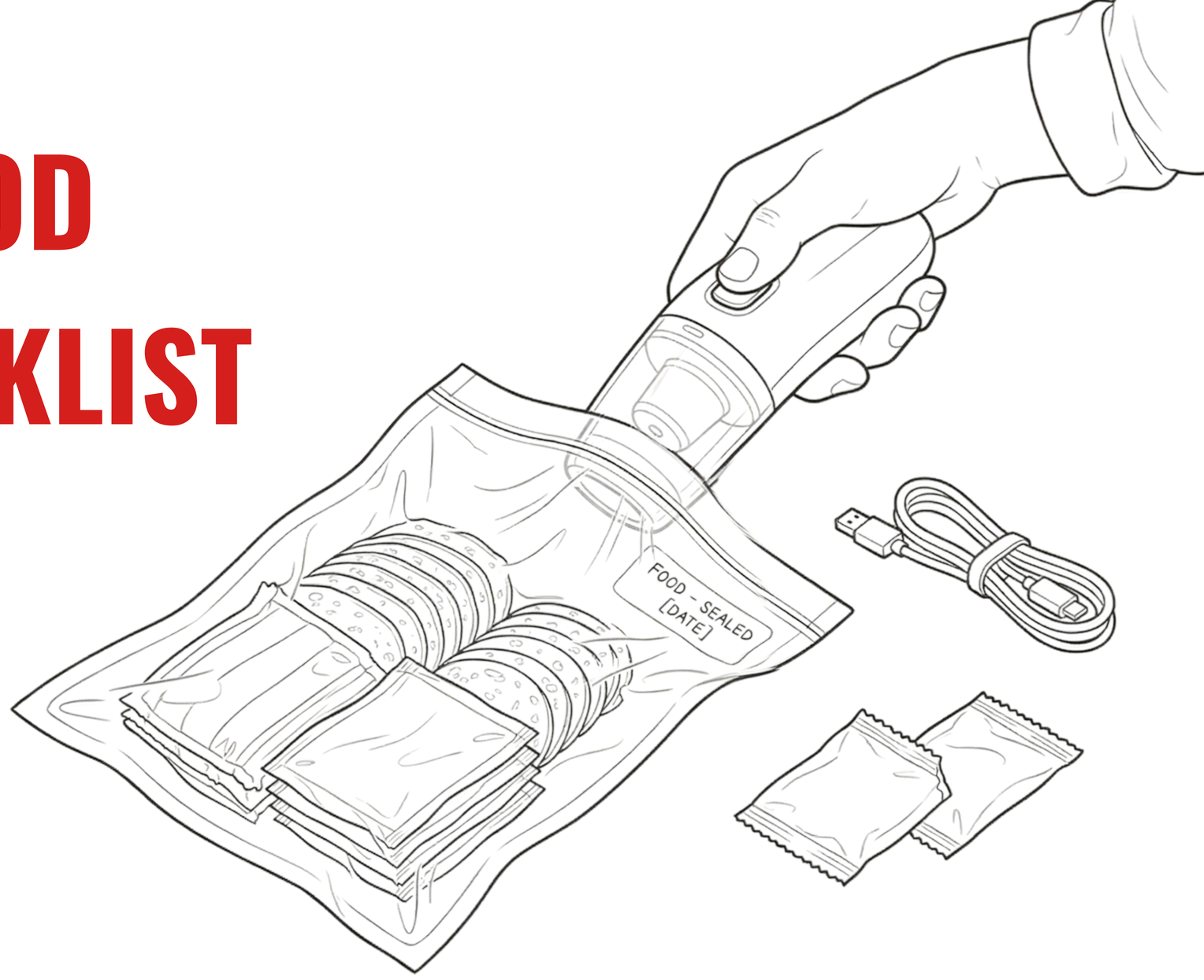
LONG-TERM FOOD STORAGE CHECKLIST



PART 1: FOOD PACKAGING METHOD (30+ FOODS)

MYLAR + OXYGEN ABSORBERS (20+ YEAR STORAGE)

- ☐ White rice
- ☐ Brown rice
- ☐ Dried beans (black, pinto, kidney, navy)
- ☐ Lentils
- ☐ Split peas
- ☐ Wheat berries
- ☐ Oats (rolled or steel-cut)
- ☐ Quinoa
- ☐ Barley
- ☐ Pasta (egg-free only)
- ☐ White flour
- ☐ Whole wheat flour
- ☐ Cornmeal
- ☐ Sugar (white, brown)
- ☐ Salt
- ☐ Powdered milk (non-fat)
- ☐ Freeze-dried fruits
- ☐ Freeze-dried vegetables
- ☐ Dehydrated vegetables
- ☐ Dried onions/garlic
- ☐ Coffee beans (whole)
- ☐ Cocoa powder
- ☐ Dried herbs/spices
- ☐ Baking powder/soda
- ☐ Popcorn kernels

VACUUM SEAL ONLY (6-12 MONTH ROTATION)

- ☐ Nuts (almonds, walnuts, cashews)
- ☐ Seeds (sunflower, pumpkin)
- ☐ Ground coffee
- ☐ Brown rice (short-term only)
- ☐ Dried fruits (raisins, cranberries)
- ☐ Beef jerky
- ☐ Granola

DO NOT PACKAGE (STORE DIFFERENTLY)

- ☐ Honey (original container)
- ☐ Oils (cool, dark cabinet)
- ☐ Canned goods (as-is)
- ☐ High-fat foods (freeze or rotate fast)

PART 2: VACUUM SEALING SAFETY CHECK

VACUUM SEALING WORKS FOR

- ☐ Food you'll eat within 6-12 months
- ☐ Short-term pantry rotation
- ☐ Freezer storage backup
- ☐ Refrigerator meal prep

VACUUM SEALING FAILS FOR

- ☐ Multi-year emergency storage
- ☐ Sharp foods (puncture bags)
- ☐ High-altitude locations
- ☐ Foods with any moisture content
- ☐ Anything you won't rotate within 1 year

PART 3: OXYGEN ABSORBER SIZING GUIDE

MATCH YOUR CONTAINER SIZE

- ☐ 1-quart Mylar bag = 100cc absorber
- ☐ 1-gallon Mylar bag = 300-500cc absorber
- ☐ 5-gallon bucket with liner = 2000cc absorber
- ☐ #10 can = 300cc absorber

COMMON SIZING MISTAKES TO AVOID

- ☐ Using absorbers that are too small
- ☐ Forgetting food density matters (beans pack tighter = less air)
- ☐ Trying to reuse opened absorbers
- ☐ Leaving bags open longer than 20-30 minutes after adding absorber
- ☐ Not having extras on hand (absorbers die fast once exposed)

PART 4: STORAGE MISTAKES THAT DESTROY FOOD

TEMPERATURE FAILURES

- ☐ Storing above 70°F
- ☐ Placing buckets in hot garage/attic
- ☐ Direct sunlight exposure
- ☐ Near heat sources (furnace, water heater)
- ☐ Temperature swings (uninsulated spaces)

PACKAGING FAILURES

- ☐ Incomplete Mylar seals (check for gaps)
- ☐ Using regular plastic instead of Mylar
- ☐ Not removing enough air before sealing
- ☐ Food moisture above 10% (use moisture meter)
- ☐ Oxygen absorber too small for container

HANDLING FAILURES

- ☐ No pack dates labeled on bags
- ☐ No rotation system (FIFO = First In, First Out)
- ☐ Bags touching concrete floor (moisture wicks up)
- ☐ No rodent protection (metal cans or hard bins)
- ☐ Mixing old and new batches without labels

PART 5: PACKING DAY CHECKLIST

BEFORE YOU START

- ☐ Food is bone dry (check with moisture meter if unsure)
- ☐ Correct size oxygen absorbers ready
- ☐ Mylar bags inspected (no holes or tears)
- ☐ Heat sealer plugged in and tested
- ☐ Labels and permanent marker ready
- ☐ Work area clear and clean
- ☐ You can work FAST (absorbers activate in 20-30 min)

DURING PACKING

- ☐ Fill Mylar bags only 3/4 full
- ☐ Squeeze out excess air gently
- ☐ Add oxygen absorber
- ☐ Seal immediately (within 20-30 minutes)
- ☐ Leave 3-4 inches at top unsealed, then seal edge
- ☐ Double-check seal is complete (no gaps)

AFTER PACKING (CHECK WITHIN 24 HOURS)

- ☐ Mylar bags pulled tight (vacuum effect from absorber)
- ☐ No soft spots or air pockets
- ☐ Every bag labeled with: food type, pack date, quantity
- ☐ Stored in cool (below 70°F), dark, dry location
- ☐ Off concrete floor (use pallets or shelving)
- ☐ Away from walls (air circulation)
- ☐ Rotation schedule noted (if applicable)t

PART 6: QUICK WINS RIGHT NOW

AUDIT YOUR CURRENT SYSTEM

- ☐ Check all vacuum-sealed bags older than 1 year (re-pack if for long-term)
- ☐ Verify Mylar seals are still tight
- ☐ Confirm storage area is below 70°F
- ☐ Look for rodent damage or moisture issues
- ☐ Confirm all containers are labeled with dates

FIX THE BIGGEST RISKS FIRST

- ☐ Move food out of hot areas (garage, attic)
- ☐ Re-pack any vacuum-sealed long-term food into Mylar
- ☐ Replace any failed seals
- ☐ Add oxygen absorbers if you skipped them
- ☐ Get food off concrete floors